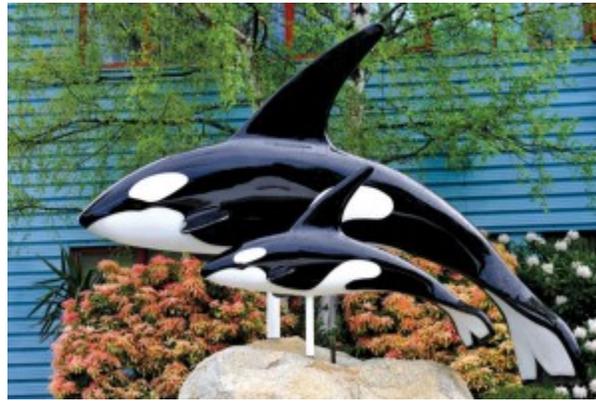


## Orcas return to engineers

By Lt Chris Larouche, Base Construction Engineering



Base Construction Engineering (BCE) employees had a “whale” of a day April 26 when they celebrated a milestone reached by the Canadian Military Engineer Branch – their 109th anniversary.

Part of the day’s event included the rededication of two new fibreglass Orca statues that were reinstalled as the centre piece of the fountain entitled “The Spirit of Construction Engineering.”

The original killer whale monuments were dedicated in 2003 to commemorate the Branch’s centenary, a landmark occasion signifying the important role played by engineers throughout the ages.

Sheltered by a tent, the BCE Officer, LCol Darlene Quinn, kicked off the celebration by reactivating the fountain by remote control. Mother Nature, acknowledging an engineer’s ability to plan for wet weather, tested that resolve by contributing winds that forced the fountain spray in the direction of the podium.

Unwavering, the BCEO noted that Canadian Military Engineers have participated in every major war and conflict, as well as peace support and domestic operations since the inception of the Branch.

The importance of engineering trades dates back to the late Stone Age, she said, adding that since that time, engineers have designed and/or built fortifications, roadways, water supply infrastructure and even participated in the design and construction of the pyramids.

LCol Quinn acknowledged Fleet Maintenance Facility personnel for the months of hard work that went into fabricating the new arcing whale statues, which form part of the display located in front of the Construction Engineering building. The original design was conceived by Ken Lidstone, a long serving member of the Branch, along with several other serving and retired civilian members in 2002.

The event echoed the sentiment of the inaugural dedication ceremony in 2003, attended at the time by LCol (Ret) Paul Arsenault, former BCEO, and British Columbia’s former LGov Iona Campagnolo.

The recent dedication and birthday celebration was made extra special for a few military members when LCol Quinn presented MCpl Mike Ward from Joint Task Force Pacific with his Canadian Forces Decoration (CD). She also promoted two members, Sgt Gerry Jamieson and MCpl Marcel Kozyn from the Pacific Naval Construction Troop.

Refreshments during the event were provided by the Canadian Military Engineers Association (CMEA), an organization that strives to enhance the well-being of its members, provides educational bursaries and links engineers through events and newsletters.

Overall, the 109th birthday culminated in a successful gathering of serving and retired civilian and military engineers who re-connected and enjoyed the camaraderie of the event. Numerous personnel were once again reminded that engineers enable everyone to enjoy a good quality of life.